United Nations A/71/151

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 July 2016

Original: English

Seventy-first session
Items 97 (m) and (q) of the preliminary list*
General and complete disarmament

Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures; and assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is in response to requests to the Secretary-General contained in General Assembly resolutions 69/60 and 70/29, respectively on consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures; and assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them.

The report refers to cross-cutting and relevant issues covered in the Secretary-General's report on the illicit trade in small arms, an advance copy of which was submitted in May 2016 to the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in New York from 6 to 10 June 2016. It summarizes the activities of the following mechanisms: the Group of States Interested in Practical Disarmament Measures; the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation; and the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms.

More detailed coverage of the issue of small arms and light weapons can be found in document A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/1.

* A/71/50.

16-12129 (E) 200716

Please recycle

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 69/60, on consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventy-first session a report on the implementation of practical disarmament measures, taking into consideration the activities of the Group of Interested States.

2. By its resolution 70/29, on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General and those States and organizations in a position to do so to continue to provide assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them. In the same resolution the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to consider the matter and to report on the implementation of the resolution to the Assembly at its seventy-first session.

3. The present report is submitted pursuant to the requests made by the General Assembly in the above-mentioned resolutions. To enable a coherent approach to those overlapping and interconnected issues, the two resolutions, 69/60 and 70/29, are addressed together in the present report.

II. Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures; and assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them

Report of the Secretary-General on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons

4. The Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects considered a report by the Secretary-General on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (A/CONF.192/BMS/2016/1). Considerations and recommendations contained in that report are of relevance for the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures as well as for considerations of assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them.

5. The report included the following topics which are relevant to the present report: (1) the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and general implementation of the Programme of Action; (2) an update on developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design and their implications for the International Tracing Instrument; and (3) the adequacy, effectiveness and sustainability of financial and technical assistance, including the transfer of technology and equipment; options for enhanced funding of activities relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, including trust fund arrangements; and options for the establishment of programmes for the training of relevant officials.

Group of States Interested in Practical Disarmament Measures

6. The Group of States Interested in Practical Disarmament Measures was established in 1998 in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly, to facilitate consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures.[1] The concept of practical disarmament originated from the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" and the "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace".[2] The Group provides an informal New York-based forum of States, open to international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations.

7. The Group continued to support the United Nations small arms process, with a specific focus on the facilitation of international assistance in the implementation of the Programme of Action on small arms. The meetings of the Group provided opportunities to share lessons learned from projects implemented at the regional level, including in the Sahel region; to enhance financial support to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation; and to promote the nexus between small arms control and the global development agenda including through the maintenance of dialogue between donors and recipient countries and other institutions on issues such as target 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, pertaining to the reduction of illicit arms flows.

United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation

8. The United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR)[3] provides financial assistance in support of the implementation of the Programme of Action. It was set up in response to the call by the Second Review Conference on the Programme of Action, held in 2012, for improved trust fund arrangements to ensure the sustainability of assistance. UNSCAR improves the effectiveness of assistance through better coordination and better matching of assistance needs with resources.

9. Since its inception in 2013, UNSCAR has funded 39 projects on a total budget of approximately US$6 million in all regions of the world.[4] In the reporting period, 11 projects were funded with a total budget of US$1.7 million.

10. Project activities included capacity-building, contributions to ongoing multilateral and national processes, implementation tools and guides, action-oriented research, information platforms, databases, and e-learning. Thematic issues which were addressed included legislation, end use/user control, national points of contact, reporting, weapons destruction, stockpile management, border control, gender and children, public awareness, and South-South cooperation.

United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms

11. The United Nations is actively engaged in supporting Member States to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, drawing on the unique strengths and expertise of 23 different United Nations departments, agencies and programmes and funds, which are brought together in the Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism.

---

[1] Resolution 52/38 G, para. 4.

[2] A/47/277-S/24111; and A/50/60-S/1995/1.

[3] www.un.org/disarmament/unscar/.

[4] A detailed list of all projects is available from www.un.org/disarmament/unscar.

12. Through CASA, the United Nations developed and implemented the voluntary International Small Arms Control Standards, which provide clear, practical and comprehensive guidance on fundamental aspects of small arms and light weapons control.[5] The standards are used by CASA partners to ensure that the United Nations as a whole consistently delivers the highest quality advice and support to Member States, regional organizations, civil society and the private sector. The standards are currently being used and supported in more than 90 countries. A software tool to facilitate national applications of the standards accommodates different levels of implementation among States.

13. CASA participants have provided a broad range of support to Member States, including strengthening institutional capacities, supporting the secure management of weapons and ammunition, implementing community-oriented policing, ensuring safer living environments, countering organized crime and terrorism, and building capacity on marking and record-keeping of small arms and light weapons.

[5] www.smallarmsstandards.org.